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MHBK

11 December 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHIEF, POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

SUBJECT: Magyar Harcosok Bajtársi Közössége (MHBK) (Fraternal Unity of Hungarian Veterans)

1. Pursuant to my conversation several days ago with [] Chief of the combined Hungarian Desk, EE, I have been disturbed about the possibility of CIA establishing a partnership with the French for the purpose of supporting and gaining control of the notorious MHBK.

2. As you will recall, the MHBK originally was organized to serve the French Intelligence. It was heavily subsidized during the year 1945-48 although since 1948 the subsidy has been reduced to almost nothing, and the MHBK financed itself by selling fabricated intelligence to any purchaser, it was and still is closely tied in with France. In fact, as I told you, General ZAKO recently received approximately \$18,000.00 from French sources as onetime assistance through the good offices of Otto of Habsburg.

3. As you also know, the MHBK's top echelon is composed of the most infamous Hungarian Nazis and even if attempts were made to purge the organization of its more obnoxious elements (the possibility of which I doubt), nothing could ever erase their stigma in the eyes of the Hungarian people, and nothing could ever sell them as a respectable group of people.

4. Hungarians in Hungary have always considered the organization a terrorist group even before General ZAKO made his famous speech a few months ago through Radio France threatening the Hungarians with "punishment" after the liberation. I venture to say that if a liberation army of western powers would near Hungary with the MHBK in its midst, many otherwise politically reliable and decent Hungarians, rather than assisting the liberation forces, would consider the more unfortunate choice of seeking asylum in the USSR.

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5. As you will also recall, [] spent considerable time and effort in presenting a true picture of this group and proved beyond any doubt that it is thoroughly penetrated by the Communist Party of Hungary.

6. Joint support of the MHBK with the French and possible employment of this group in the event of war would serve only the policy interests of the Eckhardt-Otto Axis, which are that after the liberation of Europe, the United States should return to America and leave the management of Europe to the French who have more know-how in European affairs. Various efforts to "sell" the MHBK to both the Pentagon and the CIA have originated in the same vast and well organized network of the Eckhardt-Otto alliance.

7. If it is the policy of the United States to hand over eventually the Eastern European countries to France and permit them to exist as French Satellites, then, of course, the plan to create a Hungarian group jointly with the French is a logical move. I believe, however, that before acting in this manner we should determine what State post-war policy would be.

8. Even if it were the policy of this country to commit itself to such a course, I would regard supporting the MHBK as a fatal move for the aforementioned reasons. Since any project contemplating the use of the MHBK has very definite political implications, it is strongly recommended that such action be further considered by this staff and any other office of this Agency concerned with the enactment of United States policy.

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